

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending, with claim 1 being independent. Claim 1 has been amended.

Initially, applicant acknowledges with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claim 11 is directed to allowable subject matter.

Drawing Objections

Figs. 12-14 have been amended in response to the Examiner's objections.

With respect to the Examiner's objection that "the specific details of the relationship between Figures 1-3, 5 and 10 cannot be seen clearly," applicant respectfully submits that the application clearly sets forth this relationship. As to the relationship between Figs. 1-3, the application clearly sets forth at, for example, page 7, that Fig. 1 shows a plug connector, Fig. 2 shows the plug connector of Fig. 1 with a suitable plug in place, and Fig. 3 shows the plug connector of Fig. 1 with an unsuitable plug in place. In particular, the plug of Fig. 2 includes a coding aperture 12 (see page 10, second paragraph), while the plug of Fig. 3 does not (see page 11, first paragraph).

Fig. 5 illustrates an annular element 27 that surrounds a lower end section 26 of a socket insert 7 of the plug connector of Figs. 1-3. See page 8, fourth paragraph and page 12, first full paragraph.

As noted at page 7, Fig. 10 illustrates a switching mechanism 34 that includes a fastening disk 35 and a switching disk 36. The switching disk 36 interacts with the annular element 27. In particular, the switching disk 36 is rotated by a dog 41 of the annular element 27 (see page 10, last paragraph).

More details about the operation of the socket and plug and the interaction between the elements illustrated in Figs. 1-3, 5 and 10 may be found at page 8, second and third paragraph, page 8, first full paragraph, page 10, last two paragraphs, page 11, first full paragraph, and page 12, first full paragraph.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the drawing objections.

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Section 112 Rejections

Claims 1-25 have been rejected under section 112, second paragraph. In response to this rejection, claim 1 has been amended to change the reference to "off and on positions" to "first and second positions." This amendment is believed to address the Examiner's concerns.

As to the Examiner's statements that claims 15-22 and 24-25 cannot be examined on the merits due to allegedly poor correspondence between the specification and the drawings, applicant respectfully submits that the correspondence between the specification and the drawings is quite clear.

With respect to the Examiner's particular question regarding the interaction between the switching disk 36 and the dog 41, the application notes that the rotation of the socket insert 7 and the annular element 27 are transferred to the switching disk by the dog 41 so as to move the switching disk 36 between its locking positions. (Page 10, last paragraph.) The interaction between the dog 41 and the switching disk is described further at page 14, first full paragraph, where it is noted that the dog 41 is inserted into the dog reception means 43 of the switching disk 36 such that the switching disk 36 is moved between locking positions 37 and 38 by rotation of the annular element 27 and interaction between the dog 41 and the dog reception means 43.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under section 112, second paragraph.

Section 103 Rejections

Claims 1-6 and 23 have been rejected as being obvious over Fan in view of prior art identified in Fan. However, contrary to the Examiner's assertions, Fan does not describe or suggest a socket insert that is rotatable between first and second positions, as recited in claim 1. Rather, Fan's insert 44, which the Examiner has equated to the recited insert portion, is prevented from rotating by the interaction of pins 66 on the bottom of the insert with aligning sockets 68 in the face of an adjacent fixed insert 31. See Fan at col. 6, lines 41-43. For at least this reason, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-6 and 23.

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Claims 7-10 have been rejected as being obvious over Fan in view of Nelson, and claims 12-14 have been rejected as being obvious over Fan in view of Nelson and Hermann. Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections because Nelson and Hermann do not remedy the failure of Fan to describe or suggest the subject matter of claim 1.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 12/3/03



John F. Hayden
Reg. No. 37,640

Fish & Richardson P.C.
1425 K Street, N.W.
11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-3500
Telephone: (202) 783-5070
Facsimile: (202) 783-2331

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